

U.S. Patent Appl. No. 09/825,293  
Attorney Docket No: 021123-0280108

### I. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a protein with an amino acid sequence comprising the sequence ~~of as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 and wherein said polynucleotide may be used to recombinantly engineer bacteria with an enhanced ability to produce amino acids by fermentation.~~

21. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide consisting essentially of nucleotides 252-1673 of SEQ ID NO: 1 and ~~degenerative variants~~ fragments thereof.

22. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide consisting of nucleotides encoding a protein consisting essentially of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

23-26. (Canceled)

27. (Allowed) An isolated polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or its complement.

28-31. (Canceled)

32. (Currently Amended) A vector comprising a sequence identical to that of the isolated polynucleotide of any one of claims ~~20-31~~ 20-22, and 27.

33. (Previously Presented) A bacterium transformed with the vector of claim 32.

34. (Previously Presented) The bacterium of claim 33, wherein said vector is integrated into the bacterial genome and disrupts the endogenous mikE17 gene.

35. (Allowed) The vector pCR2.1mikE17int.

36. (Allowed) A bacterium transformed with the vector of claim 35.

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37. (Withdrawn and Currently Amended) A bacterium comprising an endogenous ~~mikE17 gene~~ a polynucleotide sequence with the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 that has been attenuated.

38. (Withdrawn and Previously Presented) The bacterium of claim 37, wherein said ~~mikE17 gene~~ has been disrupted due to the integration of a vector, wherein said vector comprises a sequence of at least 15 successive nucleotides identical to 15 successive nucleotides in SEQ ID NO: 1.

39. (Currently Amended) The isolated polynucleotide of any one of ~~claims 20, or 24-26~~ claims 20 or 27, wherein said polynucleotide is isolated from coryneform bacterium.

40. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide which hybridizes under stringent conditions to the complement of SEQ ID NO: 1 and has the same biological activity as the transcriptional regulator MikE17 wherein said stringent conditions comprise washing in 0.5X SSC at a temperature of 50 to 68°C.

41. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide which hybridizes under stringent conditions to the complement of SEQ ID NO: 1 and has the same biological activity as the transcriptional regulatory MikE17 wherein said stringent conditions comprises washing in 0.1X SSC at a temperature of 50 to 68°C.

42. (Currently Amended) The isolated polynucleotide of either claim 40 or 41, wherein said polynucleotide encodes a protein consisting essentially of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2.

43. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of any one of claims 40-42, wherein said polynucleotide is isolated from a coryneform bacterium.

44-45. (Withdrawn)